

Phenomenology of Existence as Realism in Neorealism Cinema from the Perspective of Andre Bazen and the Philosophy of Existentialism

Abstract

Bazen's ontology examination in the concept of realism in art does not contemplate objectivity as the only principle of presenting a realistic work of art; thus, according to his belief, the existential philosophy of a work should be deliberated. In fact, he does not cogitate the honest reproduction of reality as art; and realism in his opinion is achieved by a mental effort towards the objectivity of the image and based on the lack of judgment and the psychological need to recreate the world in the image. This research, which is considered as a fundamental goal and is descriptive-analytical in terms of data collection, examines Bazen's phenomenological point of view in neorealism cinema. The findings of the research show how Bazen relates to the link between neorealism and existentialism. In the course of the aesthetics of film or art, a kind of moral responsibility is given to the artist, and in terms of the aesthetics of the film, it raises an existential responsibility rather than making art a problem. The ontology of existentialism emphasizes the originality of existence, and based on this, Bazen considers the image of reality to be far from a montage and a distorted scene. Bazen's attention to the moral concept in realism in neorealism is based on the conditions that the structure of neorealism cinema shows decently, in other words, the non-partiality of the viewer in the world of the work, which frees him to think about himself in the work; not similar to expressionists in which a specific and directed thought is imposed on him.

Research aims:

١. The study of the phenomenology of existence as realism in neorealism cinema from the perspective of Andre Bazen.
٢. Phenomenology of existence as realism in neorealism cinema from the perspective and philosophy of existentialism.

Research questions:

١. How is the phenomenology of existence as realism in neorealism cinema from Andre Bazin's point of view?
٢. How is the phenomenology of existence as realism in neorealism cinema from the perspective of existentialism philosophy?

Keywords: phenomenology, realism, neorealism, existentialism, Bazin

Introduction

Realism as a comprehensive attitude in art has a long history; in such a way that most artists and commentators of art have discovered it as the "truth of life"; however, in contrast to other views that are in conflict with realism, they also built the foundations of their thought with this belief. Nonetheless, the point to consider is that even in the belief and thought of commentators of the same school, different details can be observed. Regarding realism, while most theorists pay attention to the details of the form and social themes and the understanding of the artwork as a representation of reality, French theorist Andre Bazin is looking for an ontological refuge for art and especially cinema. Bazin's great influence from the philosophy of existentialism completely affects his ontological and phenomenological view in discussing his theories about cinema. When Bazin was known as a film critic in the ١٩٤٠s, existentialism became a popular philosophy in France. This movement spread through France over the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre, a self-identified existentialist whose closeness to Bazin was due to his management of the philosophical magazine "New Age". Consequently, although Bazin confirms the techniques of realism in cinema, he revises details in the philosophy of its presentation. In fact, Bazin is making a change in the attitude towards his ontology in the concept of realism in art, which does not consider "objectivity" as a sufficient condition in presenting a realist work of art and says that the existential philosophy of a work should be taken into consideration.

Research history shows that so far no independent work with this title has been published in the field of writing, nonetheless, some works have investigated phenomenology and film. Ahmadreza Motamedi (٢٠١٨) in an article entitled "Confronting the theory of Siegfried Krakouer and Roger

Scruton in the nature of film media representation with an approach to the theory of fantasy in the philosophy of religious art" published in the journal of modern media studies, number 11; It examines the opinions of Siegfried Krakouer and Roger Scruton about representation. According to the study of this research, Siegfried Krakouer, as the last realist theorist in the classical era, considers the essential aspect of the nature of the representation of the film medium as the fundamental concepts and, in his own words, the photographic approach, and recognizes technical creativity as the inherent width of the film. Roger Scruton considers representation to be the limit of action that is its own ultimate cause. The claim of this article is that cognitive approaches always reach a dead end in summarizing the formalist-realist conflict. Andre Tudor (1989). In an article titled "Multiple Myths of Realism in Cinema" published in Kahan Farhani magazine, translated by Armen Lux, number 6; examines the views of realism in cinema and first studies the Soviet cinema and shows that this cinema seems realistic in comparison with the role of cinema in other countries and claims to present real people in situations and the events of life are real, but he emphasizes that this is merely an image of social realism with a rustle of apparent reality.

Bazen's theories about the editing techniques of Soviet cinema show that these techniques have fragmented what is in front of the camera, which leads to the disruption of the natural space. This understanding of realism contains relativism, which is in contrast to Bazin's absolutist position, especially his romantic naturalism, and it was as a result of this romantic naturalism that Bazin praised neorealism and praised Rossellini's statement that art should not manipulate nature. Rather, he should present it as it is. The results of this research show that this simply leads to a uniform and boring reaction to the realism of each film, in other words, what seems real and convincing is important and realistic expression is not so important. All the debates in the field of realism in the aesthetics of the film, all the claims of the filmmakers about making realistic films have been effective in the formation of what seems real in the film, sometimes directly and sometimes indirectly, but until an absolutist measure of aesthetics is followed, the function of the conventional image of realism will not be understood. Angela Dale Wache (2000), in her book titled "Andre Bazin's Film Theory: Art, Science, Religion" published in New York, considers the film theory of Andre Bazin eager for the freedom of interpretation of the audience and not only raises the famous question "What is cinema?", rather, the question "What is man?"

In fact, by emphasizing the importance of personality ethics, Dale Vache is the first film expert to recognize Bazan's "anti-anthropocentric" ambition of cinema in favor of a more sympathetic society. Influenced by the personalist philosophy of his master, Emmanuel Meunier, Bazan argued that cinema is a mental machine that interrogates its audience about how humankind can interact with other human beings in an egalitarian manner. Despite Bazan's emphasis on ethics, his film theory is rich in metaphors from art and science. The French critic's metaphorical writings lyrically frame the encounters between literary texts and filmmaking styles, while elucidating the analogy between the vitality of biology and the actual ontology of cinema. Stephen J. Rifkin (۲۰۱۱) in his postdoctoral dissertation, "André Bazan's 'Ontology of the Photographic Image': Representation, Desire and Presence" from Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario; offers a new interpretation of Bazin's influential ۱۹۴۰ essay "The Ontology of the Photographic Image," showing that Bazin's essay assesses the relative value of painting, photography, and cinema in relation to three discrete ideals of representation: imitative imagery (obsession by similarity), psychological satisfaction (need to beat time) and spiritual presence (aesthetic revelation). In this research, it is argued that Bazan considers every ideal as an expression of a distinct relationship between human desire and the concept of presence, in which photography and cinema technology play a unique role. Also, "Ontology of the Photographic Image" has been summarized in French and English and the two existing French versions have been compared. A historical overview of the interpretations of this article in English film theory is presented, emphasizing its use in the development of the concept of cinematic realism and it is argued that English-language interpretations of this article ignore Bazan's strategy of using three separate criteria to make a comparison, i.e. imitative representation, psychological satisfaction and spiritual revelation; each of which have been considered in detail and have their own social, cultural and historical myths. The "obsession with similarity" is presented as a reference to the epistemological ideals of Cartesian rationalism. It is shown that Bazin shows the mechanical objectivity of photography and cinema over the inherent subjectivity of painting. "The need to defeat time" relates to the ability of photography and cinema to evoke a fundamental desire in the viewer. He explains the existence of absent things by reading the book "Imagination" by Sartre and Durbin Lucida Barthes. Bazan's "Aesthetic Revelation" shows that photography and cinema go beyond the capacity of painting to reveal spiritual reality and this issue is explained by reading Kandinsky's book about spirituality in art.

The research method of this research is fundamental in terms of its goal and seeks to re-cognize neo-realism or realism, which presents an existential concept in the structure of neo-realism cinema in Bazan's ontology. Also, the research method in this study is descriptive-analytical in terms of data collection, and the data collection method is through library studies.

Conclusion

The player we need is a realist player who discovered a desire for similarity in the cinema that, when nurtured by the artist, can experience a world similar to ours. This Bazan, as we described him, is not a naive positivist who has created under the cover of cinematic objectivity (criticisms that have been and will be made against him). Instead, he is a theoretician with a complex mind who imagines an art form in opposition to its hidden ontology and asks a writer to philosophically target the spatio-temporal aesthetics of the medium and create an image that, like us, perceives reality in this way. In order to experience in the theory of his admired contemporaries such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Bazin emphasized that art is about humanism, and his definition of films and filmmakers confirms this by reminding us of our common method. Being in the world, by showing this world through the very image it is made to see. With the ontological expression of existentialism, Bazin emphasizes the authenticity of existence and considers the image of reality to be far from montage and a distorted scene. Based on the principle of "man condemned to freedom", he tries to present this attitude in the cinema of neorealism and realism, and shows well that the realism in neorealism, far from being biased, leaves the viewer in the world of the work. It makes him think about the work himself, not that a specific and directed thought is imposed on him similar to the expressionists.

References

Andrew, D. (٢٠١٠). What Cinema Is! Bazin's Quest and its Charge. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, Print.

Bazin, A. (١٩٧١). André Bazin and Italian Neorealism. What is Cinema? Volume ٢. Trans. and ed. Hugh Gray. Berkeley: U of California P, Print.

Bazin, A. (٢٠٠٩). André Bazin and Italian Neorealism. What is Cinema? Trans. and ed. Timothy Barnard. Montreal: Caboose, Print.

Bazin, A. (۱۹۶۸). André Bazin and Italian Neorealism. Trans. and Ed. Bert Cardullo. New York: Continuum, Print.

Cardullo, B. (۱۹۸۸). "Defining the Real: The Film Theory and Criticism of André Bazin." André Bazin and Italian Neorealism. Trans. and ed. Cardullo. New York: Continuum, ۱-۱۷. Print.

Henderson, B. (۱۹۸۰). A Critique of Film Theory. New York: E.P. Dutton, Print.

Sartre, J. (۱۹۷۵). "Existentialism is a Humanism." Trans. Philip Mairet. Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre. Ed. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Meridian, ۳۴۵-۳۶۹.

Sartre, J. (۱۹۶۳). The Imaginary: A Phenomenological Psychology of the Imagination. Trans. Jonathan Webber. New York: Routledge. Print.

Sartre, Jean Paul. (۱۹۴۵). Existence and Nonexistence: Phenomenology of the World of Existence, translated by Enayatullah Shakibapour, Tehran: World of Books. [In Persian].